



Australian Bureau of Statistics

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New Census Working Papers - Two new 1996 Census Working Papers on Labour Force Status and Housing are due to be released in May 1999. Census Working Papers are designed to assess and report on various aspects of census data quality.

ABS PRODUCTS

Year Book Australia 1999 - Now into its 90th year the Year Book Australia 1999 provides the perfect insight into our nation and our people. The Year Book is a comprehensive general reference work which offers you a unique picture of the economic and social infrastructure in Australia.

Australian Social Trends 1999 - the latest in a series of publications enabling you to keep track of social change in Australia.

SEIFA education case study

Analysing Educational Outcomes Using Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA)

By Judith Lydeamore and Frank Biedermann, Research Section, Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia (SSABSA).

"The Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia (SSABSA) has a legislative responsibility for administering the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE). In carrying out this mandate, it prepares curriculum, conducts assessments, and certifies achievement for students in the final two years of secondary education.

Using student descriptors such as students' age, sex and language spoken at home, SSABSA undertakes annual monitoring of student participation and performance in each of the subjects offered by the Board. In each component of the SACE the Board investigates whether differential access and outcomes are being experienced by any groups of students. The SSABSA data indicate a range of factors affecting students' participation and performance in the SACE, particularly their socio-economic status.

These findings prompted SSABSA to supplement its own data with the ABS' Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), with particular reference to the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage.

For SSABSA's purposes, the value of this Index lies in its coverage of a range of social and economic factors derived from attributes such as low income, low educational attainment, high unemployment, and jobs in relatively unskilled occupations.

This information has enabled SSABSA to determine quartile ranking's of relative disadvantage, based on the postcode of each student's home address.

The use of these quartiles enables SSABSA to analyse the relationship between socio-economic levels and student participation and performance.

Statistics using the SEIFA Index show that students from the most socio-economically disadvantaged background typically have the poorest subject results and complete the requirements of the SACE at a lower rate than students from higher ranked quartiles.

Their pattern of enrolments in non-compulsory subjects also reflects disadvantage in that such students tend to choose subjects that do not lead to professional careers.

The usefulness of SEIFA has encouraged SSABSA to purchase other ABS products, such as CDATA96, with a view to making data more accessible to the widest possible audience through visually enhancing tables of information with the graphics and mapping facilities they provide. SSABSA intends producing thematic maps based on SEIFA and census data to enhance its analyses, presentation and reporting of student participation and performance in the SACE to the SSABSA Board's subcommittees and the wider community.

"The capacity of products like CDATA96 to present large quantities of information in an attractive way that is easy to visualise and interpret will ensure SSABSA continues to use ABS products in the presentation of its statistical data."

Better schooling with Socio-Econmic Indexes For Areas

This case study was provided to Census Update by Alan Williams, Company Secretary, Victorian Independent Schools Block Grant Authority. The Authority administers the Commonwealth Capital Grants Program for non-government schools in Victoria. Schools apply to them for capital funding .

Improving educational outcomes is a priority for the Authority - and this is particularly true of schools catering for students with disadvantaged backgrounds. Schools that meet initial eligibility guidelines are assessed - using the ABS' Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) - and then placed in priority order according to their communities' social and economic characteristics.

The Authority uses the SEIFA "Index of Disadvantage" as one of its main indicators, as it focuses on low income earners, relatively lower educational attainment, high unemployment, rented dwellings and people lacking fluency in English.

The SEIFA index score provides an impartial and unbiased means of combining and weighting the needs of each schools' feeder community. It is used to rank the grant applications in order of need, and this information assists the Board of Directors in prioritising funding.

In addition, the Authority purchased CDATA96 as a service to participating member schools, as it allowed them to analyse the demographics of existing or proposed catchment areas. Member schools use the information by extracting data by age groupings, occupations, education, ethnicity, income characteristics and religion. This information has also been used by some school councils in decision making, policy development, planning and marketing.

The use of census information - firstly with CDATA91 and now with SEIFA and CDATA96 - has effectively assisted the Victorian Independent Schools Block Grant Authority to administer the grants program, especially in relation to socio-economic prioritisation.

"The ABS has helped develop detailed step-by-step manuals to meet our particular needs and as a result, the processes are easy enough that anybody could pick up the manual and produce the required information."

The Victorian Independent Schools Block Grant Authority has received many enquiries on the use of the packages from organisations who also use socio-economic factors in their

submissions assessment process.

"Talking to the ABS about our particular needs has resulted in benefits for both organisations."

New Indigenous Geographical Classification now available

New Indigenous Geographical Classification now available

The **Australian Indigenous Geographical Classification** (AIGC) (Cat. No. 4706.0.30.001: \$50.00) is a new geographical classification designed specifically for use with 1996 Census data about Indigenous Australians. The classification covers the entirety of Australia and has been designed to allow users of Census data to access visual references for geographic areas of interest.

The classification is hierarchical as follows:

- ATSIC Regions (Boundaries prescribed for use by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, which generally match Collection District boundaries);
- Indigenous Areas (approximately 280+ Indigenous persons); and
- Indigenous Locations (approximately 80+ Indigenous persons).

Available on CD-ROM, maps are provided for each level of the classification. Users can zoom in on parts of a map, print the whole or a section of a map and cut and paste it into other applications. Descriptive text and concordances are also contained on the CD-ROM.

The AIGC can also be used as an electronic atlas, to give users of 1996 Census data an accurate picture of the boundaries of the geographic areas used in standard output. Feedback from users of this classification will result in improvements in the next edition, planned to coincide with the 2001 Census. The codes and labels of the Australian Indigenous Geographical Classification are included, and the basis for deriving the geography is described.

The AIGC complements the information contained in the Summary and Detailed Indigenous Profiles.

See also **National Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics (NATSIS) Newsletter**

1996 Census User Consultation

Planning for 2001 Census Products and Services has begun

The Australian Bureau of Statistics has commenced a user consultation process as part of the development of the 2001 Census output program.

There will be several stages of consultation involving both qualitative and quantitative research. The overall aim can be broken down into four objectives which are to:

- 1) better understand overall user reactions to the 1996 output program;
- 2) understand user reactions to specific 1996 products and services;
- 3) identify emerging needs in the market place and how the ABS can develop products and services to meet these needs; and
- 4) report on the outcome of the research and make recommendations to users and ABS management for the 2001 output program.

By undertaking wide client consultation, the ABS will be able to better understand users' needs and this information will assist the ABS to design 2001 Census products and services.

Two publications will be prepared to inform users of ABS views on the 2001 Census Output Program

ABS Views on Census Output - an overview of the strategic direction. This publication will provide information about the proposed release strategy, proposed product range, a tentative release schedule, the proposed confidentiality procedures for 2001, and major changes to concepts and classifications. The publication will focus on strengths identified in the initial qualitative research and will seek to address the reported weaknesses.

ABS Views on Census Products and Services - will cover changes to the output program as a result of the qualitative and quantitative research. This document will provide product outlines, indicative release dates and prices. A questionnaire seeking general feedback on the product proposals, as well as specific feedback on the content of the Community Profile series will be included.

KEY CONSULTATION DATES

FEBRUARY 1999

The first round of consultation commenced in February 1999 and consists of qualitative studies based on relatively small sample sizes. This initial research aims to determine clients' overall attitudes to the 1996 Census output program and their views on selected

products and services such as CDATA96, Census KeyData, SEIFA96 and Community Profile series.

SEPTEMBER 1999

ABS Views on Census Output will be sent to all **Census Update** subscribers in September 1999. In this publication people will be asked to express their interest in taking part in the next stage of the consultative process. Respondents will then be sent a questionnaire which will comprise two parts:

- a) questions relating to the client's use of 1996 Census products and services and the client's use of technology (formats/ media/ delivery mechanisms, industry standard software in use, internet use); and
- b) questions relating to the strategies proposed by ABS which reflect users' views highlighted in the qualitative research for 2001 Census products and services.

JUNE 2000

ABS Views on Census Products and Services will also be sent to all **Census Update** subscribers. This publication will document the full range of products and services to be produced for the 2001 Census, including a CDATA-type product. A questionnaire will seek detailed information on the proposed data content of specific products. In addition to the mail-out of publications and questionnaires, a number of face-to-face interviews will be conducted with key users to obtain more detailed feedback. A supplement containing detailed information about the content of the proposed publications and Community Profile series will also be provided to users for reference when completing the survey.

Census Update will keep you up-to-date with the latest consultation activities so you can have your say on the 2001 Census products and services.

What's in a Basic Community Profile?

What's in a Basic Community Profile?

The Basic Community Profile contains 32 tables of detailed census data on people, families and dwellings for all geographic areas from Collection District level (approximately 225 households) to all of Australia.

An example of the contents of a BCP is now available on the Census page of the ABS' web site (<https://www.abs.gov.au>).

All 32 tables of total Australia have been placed onto the web site to illustrate the extent of information available in a BCP.

CDATA96 Case Study - NSW Attorney General's Department



CDATA96 Case Study - NSW Attorney General's Department

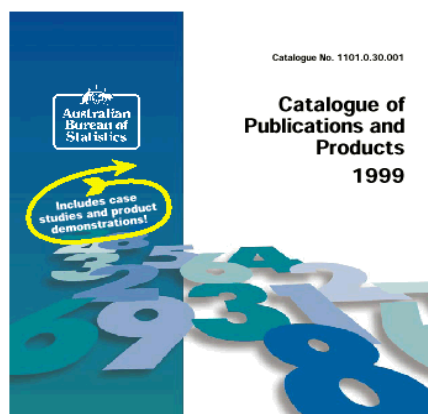
Bruce Kelly of the NSW Attorney General's Department describes how they have been using CDATA96 to realise the full potential of its existing business information systems.

"Attorney Generals have coded all 161 Local Court locations across NSW and constructed areas (made up of postcodes) that represent Local Court districts. What this enables us to do quickly and effectively is access any of the information contained on CDATA96 for our own areas rather than aggregating postal areas together each time data is required.

In addition Attorney General's has imported our own information on crime rates to use CDATA96 as a database containing all information the department has regarding the court districts. The result for our organisation is full access to a tailored mix of spatial demographic and business information to assist in service delivery planning and capital asset acquisition."

Three Ways to get our Guide to ABS Products and Services

Three Ways to get our Guide to ABS Products and Services



The **1999 Catalogue of Publications and Products** is available as hardcopy, on this web site and on CD-ROM. All versions showcase numerous ABS products and services, as well as reference materials.

The CD-ROM version provides you with:

- samples of information contained in our essential reference publications (eg. **Social Atlases** and **Australian Economic Indicators**);
- demonstrations of electronic products (eg. CDATE96 and PC AUSSTATS); and
- a series of case studies highlighting the capabilities of the ABS Consultancy Services.

Phone 1300 135 070 for your free copy of the CD-ROM version.

Whatever information you are looking for, you will be able to find a reference to it in our catalogue.

Order Form

New Census Working Papers

New Census Working Papers

Two new 1996 Census Working Papers on Labour Force Status and Housing are due to be released in May 1999. Census Working Papers are designed to assess and report on various aspects of census data quality.

The **Labour Force Status Working Paper** assesses the effect of changes made to the 1991 labour force component for the 1996 Census. The main changes include changing hours worked to refer to all jobs rather than main job and the addition of a new core question concerning availability to start work. Comparison with data from both the 1991 Census and the 1996 Labour Force Survey reveal a general improvement in data quality since the 1991 Census. The reasons for these improvements and future possible changes to the census labour force component are also outlined.

The **Housing Working Paper** provides an assessment of the quality of the housing data from the 1996 Census. The housing variables discussed in the paper include: Tenure Type, Rent/Housing Loan Repayment, and Structure of Dwellings. From the analyses conducted, the changes for the 2001 Census are currently being determined, however it is unlikely that the form will be changed substantially.

Upcoming Census Working Papers will analyse topics associated with Industry, Occupation, Income and the Indigenous Enumeration Strategy.

To obtain your copy of either of these working papers, call the ABS office in your State/ Territory.

[Click here to view other papers, including Census Working Papers, on this site.](#)

About this Release

A periodic newsletter to keep clients informed of developments in Census products and services. Highlights recent and forthcoming releases, provides comments on census data and advises of user forums.

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